



FRIENDS AND SHIPMATES.

Lieutenant Dewey's Most Famous Adventure.

Dewey's most famous adventure up to the time he destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay was in connection with the sinking of the Mississippi at Port Hudson.

Although the Confederates had mounted heavy guns on the bluffs above the bend in the Mississippi River at this point, and had improvised searchlights, and thought they had made it impossible for any craft to pass, Farragut determined to run the gauntlet. The Mississippi, exposed to a frightful bombardment, held her way until she got into a swirl right at the bend that swept her around. She was exposed to the fire of the whole of the Confederate battery, and though she worked her starboard guns until the vessel was broken and shattered, there was never a chance to save her. The ship was settling deeper and deeper in the mud, and the rebels had the range so perfectly that every shot was telling. The decks were cumbered with wounded men and slippery with blood, when it was resolved to abandon the old sidewheeler. Dewey, as executive officer of the ship, superintended the throwing overboard of the small arms and the spiking of the guns. Then he had the vessel fired in four places, so as to insure her total destruction.

Orders were given to the crew to save themselves as best they might. The men jumped overboard or went off in boats until finally there was left on the ship only the Captain and Lieutenant Dewey. The wounded had been taken off and the fire was rapidly enveloping the vessel. Captain Smith then left and Dewey was making a last search below decks to be sure that nobody had been abandoned when the vessel began to head over. Dewey saved himself through a port-hole. When he found himself in the water he saw a seaman trying to keep his head above water, after his right arm had been shattered by a bullet. He struck out for the sailor and helped him until they reached a floating spar. Even the enemy were impressed by the deed, and though others had been shot in the water they seemed to withhold their fire from where the officer was struggling to save the wounded seaman. Dewey managed to reach a floating spar with his charge and both got safely to the shore.

Almost Drowned Doing a Stunt.

THE narrowest escape from death that Dewey ever had was not where shot and shell were shrieking, but in a pool in the bend of Dog River, two and a half miles from his old Montpelier home. He and a number of other boys, larger than himself, were swimming there and the elder boys were diving and remaining under water as long as possible. There was one in particular who demonstrated his ability to fetch a great way under water. Dewey could not bear to have anybody excel him in any athletic feat, and when this boy surpassed his own record challenged him to a test. The champion dived in again and swam out below the surface even further than he had gone before.

Then it was Dewey's turn. He plunged in, and the boys waited for him to rise. After a few seconds they raised a shout that he had won. But more seconds went by, and still no Dewey rose from the water. At last they realized that something serious had happened, and went to look for their playmate. Their cries brought a number of men to assist in their search, and finally George Dewey was brought up from the river bottom insensible, apparently dead. They rolled him on a birch, held him up by the heels so that the water would run out of him, and finally, after several minutes of suspense he opened his eyes, and before he could rise, he asked: "Well, did I beat him?"

The Lady Who Put Officers in Jeopardy.

Dewey, for many years, has been a ladies' man. In Washington he has long been a favorite at 5 o'clock teas and evening receptions, and no man was more sought after as a dinner guest. His well known gallantry makes an incident that occurred at Manila, after the hard fighting had begun there, all the more conspicuous. There was a young lady whose charms attracted all the ships' junior officers, and every day one or another of them would take her driving in the cool of the afternoon.

The firing line was close on the outskirts of Manila, and these drives nearly always led into the danger belt. The officers would not, of course, insist on caution, where the girl, who thoroughly understood what the song in the air meant, persisted in proceeding. At last the Admiral interfered and reproached the young woman for taking risks.

"Why, Admiral," she responded, "I am not afraid of bullets, least of all when I am protected by one of your officers."

"Well," replied the Admiral, sweetly, "if you do not object to being killed I cannot help but admire your courage, but I cannot spare any of my officers."

"I have not figured out yet," says the young woman, recounting the incident, "whether the Admiral meant that as a compliment or a rebuke. But I did not go driving on the firing line again."

George Dewey Crossing the Delaware.

THE seasons rolled by, and in Summer George began to make discoveries in American history. Washington was his first hero. There was a picture in his book of the Father of his Country crossing the Delaware. Of course George had to be Washington. He secured a flat-bottomed boat, that was moored on the Union River, and with Mary for his soldiers, wielding the paddle, George stood sternly in the bow, his hand resting in the breast of his jacket, in the correct historic attitude, staring defiantly at the villages on the bank as they drifted down. They were rescued several miles below his father's place.

Having been forbidden to go upon the river, George had to find another part. A picture of General Putnam galloping down the hundred steps fired his imagination. There was a flight of steps in the neighborhood that offered a splendid stage for his presentation. But he had no horse. Mary at last rebelled and would not be the horse. So Dewey haughtily said he would be Putnam and the horse, too. He could not be them both at once. So first he ran down the steps holding himself very erect, and shrieking cheers and taunts at the British.

Then he mounted to the top again and descended head first on his hands and knees, tossing his head and neighing at intervals until he had reached the bottom.

George Dewey, Prisoner at the Bar.

ON the docket of the old justice's court of York County, Maine, of a date thirty years ago, appears this entry:

"George Dewey, Assault, Fined \$5. Costs, \$8.80. Total, \$13.80."

The occasion for the entry was an engagement between the then lieutenant and a civilian named Garland, who did not pay what Dewey considered proper respect to him and his uniform, and in fact, jeered at them both. Dewey promptly knocked him down and Deputy Sheriff Plaisted promptly placed him under arrest.

Dewey who was then very young, and whose stripes were very new, loftily told the Deputy Sheriff he had no power to place him under arrest; that he was an officer of the United States Navy, and would decline to be taken into custody. He did unbend enough to accompany the Deputy Sheriff to the Commodore's office, in order to enlighten the law officer upon the great gulf between a Deputy Sheriff and a Lieutenant in the United States Navy. The Commodore looked at the Deputy's badge, inspected the warrant he produced, and then said:

"Lieutenant, the young man is right, and you had better prepare for trial."

It was a great come-down for Dewey, and it was a long time before he regained his full confidence in the Navy Department. He was duly tried at Kittery, and the result was as indicated by the docket. This docket is now a valued relic in the Plaisted family. And the Deputy is still alive and proud of the fact that he is the only man that ever gained an advantage over the great Dewey.

Providing Shaks for Boy Soldiers.

Dewey was fonder of playing at the soldiers than anything else when he was a boy. At that time a feature of all military parades was the sappers and miners corps. These wore shaks of bearskin in half a yard long, and instead of muskets carried axes or picks. The Montpelier school boys had organized cadet corps, and Dewey was captain of one. He was anxious that his company should be the most complete in the town, and he hit on the idea of organizing some sappers and miners, and thus bring confusion on rival companies. One Saturday afternoon Dewey's company paraded. The captain himself was chief of the sappers and miners, and every boy in the procession wore on his head a fur cylinder and carried an axe. The shaks were their mother's muffs, and the axes were from their father's wood piles.

For three blocks the procession was a triumph. Then the enemy attacked. The enemy in this case was one of the mothers who had been despoiled of her seaskin muff. As the lads proceeded the enemy appeared in greater numbers, and at every attack a sapper and miner was carried off a prisoner and spanked with utter disregard to the rules and customs of civilized battle and the articles of war.

Dewey Assists at a Dental Operation.

Dewey's father, Dr. Julius Dewey, of Montpelier, occasionally pulled teeth for his patients. Once, when the Admiral was quite a small boy, a lady appeared at the doctor's office with a badly swollen face. She had a tooth that had to come out. The doctor had no dentist's chair, and as the tooth pulling promised to be a difficult job somebody had to hold the lady's head steady. She sat in the front doorway of the office, with her feet resting on the top step, while her daughter held her head and the doctor began work.

"I tried to do as I was bid," said this daughter, years after describing the episode, "but the first twist of the doctor's instrument his patient shrieked, and I dropped everything and fled."

"Instantly little George Dewey was in my place. With a glance of contempt at me, he braced his sturdy little figure, put my mother's head firmly on his breast, grabbed an ear firmly with either small hand and told the doctor to go ahead. With the new assistant the operation was a perfect success. And as my mother arose, George graciously called out to me, 'A woman who squeals' couldn't hurt nothing.'"

Saving the Miller's Son from Work.

ONE of young Dewey's boyhood chums was the son of a man who ran a mill, a little way back in the hills. The miller's son had to help his father in the mill, and thus Dewey was defrauded of the companionship of his friend.

He described the iniquity of this to some of the other boys, and finally evolved a plan to relieve his chum of his chores for a day at least. He appointed a rendezvous, and the conspirators met one morning before it was yet light and proceeded to the mill. It was run by a water wheel, supplied from a dam, and it was Dewey's idea to empty the dam and thus stop operations. The youngsters worked like Trojans, and finally had the satisfaction of getting up the water gate, which, of course, soon drained the pond.

As the water only trickled in a small stream above the dam, it was several days before there was power to run the mill again. But this was one enterprise at least in Dewey's life in which his success was barren of result. The miller's boy was put to work watching the dam, to see that nobody interfered again, and Dewey's complicity in the plot having been discovered, he had a session with his father, the doctor, that discouraged his engineering.

The Toast to the Commodore.

IN 1897, when Commodore Dewey was ordered to the Asiatic Squadron, in anticipation of possible trouble with Spain, his friends gave him a farewell dinner at the Metropolitan Club, in Washington. Colonel Archibald Hopkins proposed the toast in rhyme, and when the prophesies embraced in it were fulfilled by the Commodore's commission as Admiral the old toast was remembered. Here it is:

Fill all your glasses full to-night;
The wind is off the shore,
And be it feast or be it fight,
We pledge the Commodore.

Through days of storm, through days of calm,
On board Pacific seas;
At anchor off the Isle of Palm
Or with the Japanese.

Ashore, afloat, on deck, below,
Or where our bulldozers roar,
To back a friend or breast a foe,
We pledge the Commodore.

We know our honor 'll be unstained
Where'er his pennant flies;
Our rights respected and maintained
Whatever power defies.

And when he takes the homeward tack,
Beneath an Admiral's flag,
We'll hail the day that brings him back
And have another jag.

Where Dewey Used to Hunt.

